

## HARDING INSISTS ON U. S. ECONOMY

Suggests Creation of Commission to Pass On All Extra Items.

DEFICIENCY \$215,891,238

Heads of Departments Notified in Order to Avoid Similar Conditions.

BUDGET TO THE RESCUE

System Expected to Curb the Evil of Deficiency Appropriations.

Special Despatch to THE NEW YORK HERALD, Washington, D. C., May 3.

As a practical step in governmental economy President Harding set his foot to-day on the old, evil practice of the executive departments in spending more than is authorized by Congress. He made it plain to the Cabinet at the semi-weekly session and also by letter that the appropriations must not be exceeded in expenditures except in instances of rare emergency. At the same time he discussed the advisability of creating a committee, to operate when the budget system goes into effect, to pass on such emergency items, determining whether they are necessary.

Mr. Harding's action followed receipt of a letter from Chairman Warren (Wyo.) of the Senate Appropriations Committee, reporting that now, after only fourteen days of the present session, deficiencies amounting to \$215,891,238 have been submitted by the executive departments, with more in sight.

"I am a believer in economy in national expenditures, in which belief I feel sure you sympathize," Senator Warren told Mr. Harding. "The one thing leading most directly to desired results in economy is team work between the legislative and executive branches of the Government. It would seem that heads of departments and Government establishments and officers of the Government charged with the responsibility of submission of estimates should be held to a strict accountability. Now that the war is over there seems to be little excuse for the various departments and establishments more nearly within their appropriations."

Mr. Harding immediately wrote to heads of the departments and independent bureaus informing them of Senator Warren's letter. He asked that the matter be brought to the attention of all

bureau chiefs so that a like situation would not be repeated in the future. "I do not know of any more dangerous tendency in the administration of Government departments," Mr. Harding added, "and I am very sure we can never fix ourselves firmly on a basis of economy until the departments are conducted within the provisions made by Congress."

The system of spending more money than is authorized originally by Congress is as old as the Government itself. It has been a system for which the blame may justly be shared by both Congress and the executive departments. In the past for deficiency bills to run as high as \$300,000,000, a little less than a tenth of the entire cost of running the Government.

In various instances Congress has passed original estimates to such an extent that the expenditures obviously were necessary, the purpose being merely to show for the time being—for political purposes—a saving of many millions of dollars. In many other cases the executive departments have been compelled to go ahead and commit the Government to expenditures because of a small unforeseen emergency. The system has opened the way for innumerable abuses.

Both in and out of Congress the opinion prevails that the budget system, which is soon to be instituted, will do much to curb the evil of deficiency appropriations. Under the budget system a definite sum would be appropriated which could not be exceeded.

It is the desire of Mr. Harding, if it can be worked out, to establish a commission which would have the authority to pass on emergency items and empowered to ask Congress to increase the further funds if they seem necessary. Such a commission would be composed of the director of the budget, the chairman of the House Appropriations Committee and the chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee.

The budget bill has passed the Senate and is now in the House with the expectation that it will become a law within a short time.

## HARDING PROCLAIMS DECORATION DAY

WASHINGTON, May 3.—The annual Memorial Day proclamation setting aside May 30 as a holiday was issued by President Harding to-day. The text follows:

"Whereas this nation has been conceived in prayer and devotion by men and women who were moved under God to found a nation where principles of right should form the lasting cornerstone, and whereas these principles, purchased at the price of great sacrifice, have been fostered by a worthy posterity, and whereas the great war has lately laid its costly demands upon our lands:

"Now, therefore, I, Warren G. Harding, President of the United States, do hereby proclaim Monday, the thirtieth day of May, a day already freighted with sacred and stimulated memories, a day of public memorial. I invite my fellow citizens fittingly to pay homage on this day to a noble dead who sleep in homeland, beneath the sea or on foreign fields, so that we who survive might enjoy the blessings of peace and happiness and to the end that liberty and justice, without which no nation can exist, shall live forever.

"In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed. Done in the District of Columbia this third day of May, in the year of Our Lord 1921 and of the Independence of the United States the 145th.

"WARREN G. HARDING."

## JOHNSON ATTACKS FITNESS OF BLAIR

Senate to Investigate Charges Before Confirming Him as Revenue Collector.

Special Despatch to THE NEW YORK HERALD, Washington, D. C., May 3.

The Senate to-day held up confirmation of the appointment of David H. Blair of North Carolina to be Internal Revenue Collector and referred it back to the Finance Committee where charges concerning his fitness for the office, made by Senator Johnson (Cal.), Republican, are to be investigated. The fight for Mr. Blair's confirmation, which took place in executive session, was headed by Senators Smoot (Utah) and Frelinghuysen (N. J.). Senator Johnson made the following statement:

"I am opposed to confirmation of Mr. Blair. My objection is based upon two grounds: First, he was a delegate to the Republican Convention, bound under the law of North Carolina to vote for the candidate receiving the majority of votes in the Presidential preference primary there. I received in that primary three times as many votes as my opponent, Blair, as a delegate, did not obey the mandate of the primary. He is now named to the most important administrative office in the United States. He administers tax, prohibition and other laws.

"The second objection to Mr. Blair, because of the secrecy maintained concerning tax returns, is involved in some obscurity. Mr. Blair's father-in-law is one of the richest, if not the richest, man in North Carolina. He sought by forming a partnership with his family to lessen the amount of his income tax. He was required to pay, and it is asserted he did pay, the full amount claimed by the Government, and the members of his family as partners have sought a refund.

"Some hundreds of thousands of dollars have been at stake. There is a dis-

pute about the present exact situation. At any rate Mr. Blair ought not to be put in a position where he is in the slightest degree connected with refunds due his wife, his father-in-law and other relatives."

## IMMIGRATION BILL PASSED BY SENATE

Senator Reed Casts the Only Dissenting Vote.

Special Despatch to THE NEW YORK HERALD, Washington, D. C., May 3.

The emergency immigration bill was approved by the Senate to-day by a vote of 78 to 1 in exactly the form that President Wilson vetoed it in the last Congress.

By a vote of 60 to 15 the Senate rejected the amendment by Senator Johnson (Cal.) to allow admission of persons seeking refuge from religious or political persecution in addition to the 15,000 who may be admitted annually under the Senate bill.

Senator Reed cast the one dissenting vote, prolonging the debate to-day in continued criticism of the policy of exclusion, which, he insisted, "was born in a shiver of hysteria" over a fancied not a real danger of a flood of undesirable immigration.

## INCREASE IN PUBLIC DEBT.

Interest Payments Responsible for Boost of \$15,460,378.

WASHINGTON, May 3.—An increase of \$15,460,378.84 in the public debt during April was announced to-day by the Treasury. On March 31 the total was \$22,380,104,597.53, as compared with \$22,995,541,774.47, April 30. Issuance of Treasury certificates and the payment of more than \$120,000,000 of interest on the public debt during the month, which was an off month for income tax receipts, officials explained, was responsible for the increase.

## ALBANY CLAIMS DROPPED.

ALBANY, May 3.—Claims against the State for \$17,938, filed by counsel for John E. Alida, who resigned from the State Senate after a hearing on charges in 1910, were dismissed by the Court of Appeals to-day. Lewis E. Carr, Danforth O. Alsworth, Martin W. Littleton and Lewis E. Griffith, who defended Alida, were the claimants.

## \$100,000,000 TO BE ADDED TO NAVY BILL

Senate Committee Will Not Include Any Provision for Disarmament.

Special Despatch to THE NEW YORK HERALD, Washington, D. C., May 3.

The naval appropriations bill, now pending completion before the Senate Committee on Naval Affairs, will carry an increase over the fiscal year of about \$100,000,000, or a total of nearly \$100,000,000, and will not include any provision for international agreement on disarmament or a naval holiday, according to information obtained from Republican Senate leaders to-day.

Senators Poinceter (Wash.), acting chairman of the committee, and Hale (Me.) conferred with the President on the disarmament question. They were assured that the President's position on international disarmament is favorable to it, but that he wishes to have a free hand in working it out in his own way, and that he does not think it advisable that a disarmament provision be included in the pending bill. His wishes in this regard, it was made plain to-day, will be observed by those in charge of the bill.

Notwithstanding, Senator Borah (Idaho) will renew his fight for a disarmament provision and has offered an amendment authorizing the President to call a disarmament conference. Failing of action in the committee, Senator Borah will offer the amendment on the floor.

Senator Poinceter said the committee expects to report about the same increases over the House bill that were added in the last Congress. These increases are substantially as follows: Aviation, including personnel, \$12,000,000; new naval bases, including Pacific coast, \$7,000,000; increased naval personnel, \$20,000,000; rations, transportation, etc., \$15,000,000; two airplane carriers, \$15,000,000; construction and repair of vessels, \$7,000,000. Other increases all along the line growing out of increased personnel made up the principal items in the \$100,000,000 increase.

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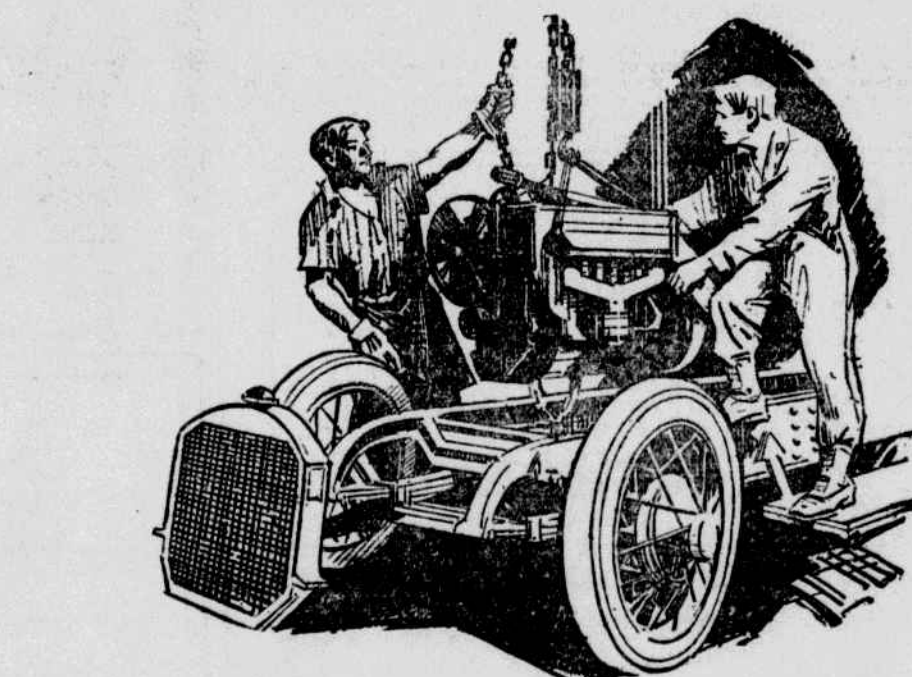
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